

Lincoln Park Advisory Council

General Meeting

Peggy Notebaert Nature Center

Draft Minutes – January 9, 2007

AGENDA

The meeting was called to order at 6:55pm by Jill Niland, president.

1. Special presentation by Steve Zelner, Exec. Dir., Lincoln Park Conservancy

Steve presented the Lincoln Park Conservancy's (LPC) long-term plan to restore the Lincoln Park Conservatory to its 19th Century glory using 21st Century techniques. The goal is to make the Conservatory a true destination site for park visitors.

Details:

- Master plan created with a professional design company.
- Master plan finalized for fund-raising purposes in May 2006; specific details of new plan will change as discussions progress.
- LPC currently in the "quiet" period of raising an initial \$10 million before making public announcement.
- Total project needs about \$45 million for the structure and \$15 million for gardens.
- LPC has a new 25-member capital campaign committee.
- Both marketing and PR firms are involved.
- There will be no change in the building's footprint. Additional public space will be gained by revising current space allocation. A multi-purpose events area will be created for public use/rental.
- The existing parking lots will not change. Additional entrances into the facility will be added to make access easier.
- The original steel structure can be restored; all glass will be replaced.
- They plan to sell plants on-site; it is a significant revenue source for other conservatories.
- Once started, the project will take up to four years to complete. Every effort will be made to keep some portion of the Conservatory open during the construction.

The main comments of LPAC members were:

- Reduce the hard surface around the structure; this is already on the LPC's to-do list.

--Do not use non-native plants (like the palms in their illustration) outside of the structure. It sends the wrong message about proper stewardship.

2. Adoption of general meeting agenda; approved by voice vote.

3. Park District Staff

Cindy Jahraus (LP Cultural Center manager) and John Davidson (Margate Park manager) each described the very long list of successful activities held at their facility. The Cultural Center users have found a sport they can excel at: skating. (A lack of proper facilities hinders their participation in most sports). The Margate kids continue to win in competitions at a variety of levels.

A long-time park user-turned-seasonal-rec leader, Maria, is interning with Cindy and Dana Zilinski for one month to get a look at the bureaucratic side of the park business. Maria is a sophomore in college with an interest in using arts in the recreation field.

Dana Zilinski (North Lakefront manager) –

--CPD has received a grant to do early childhood training for citywide park staff. The goal is to make recreational activities also educational.

--She's on the committee to train summer rec leaders.

--A variety of path improvements are expected to happen before Memorial Day: Belmont to the Totem Pole; Lawrence to Foster; Roscoe Playground.

--Technical wave modeling work is being done for the Diversey Harbor entrance as part of the revetment work.

--The handicapped lot at Montrose is being altered to eliminate the flooding problems.

--CPD is holding a community meeting to discuss improvements to the Diversey Driving Range on Monday January 22nd at 6:30 p.m. Artificial turf and enhanced lighting are being proposed. Location: St. Joseph Hospital, Alumni Room, 2913 N. Commonwealth. Free parking will be available in the hospital garage; have your ticket validated at the meeting.

4. Park District Liaison – Randi Doeker

The Park District Commissioners met today for regular business:

--CPD has a no-bid contract with the Archdiocese of Chicago to provide snacks and lunch for the day camps. The Archdiocese and the Chicago Board of Education are the only two organizations with USDA-approval for such programs. The Board of Education is not interested in the contract because it requires food delivery at times and locations they cannot support.

--CPD will switch from ownership to leasing (via a contract with Enterprise) for up to 72 vehicles.

--The Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance received a 3-year grant agreement to take over some activities at the conservatory previously provided by Aramark.

--A contract for concession management was awarded to Park Concession Management LLC.

--The Westrec marina contract was extended until March due to the delay in the bid process for the next long-term marina contract. A public speaker indicated that the several companies that he had been working with on a competing bid response would not be submitting anything.

--A presentation about the CPD-CHA partnership included information that every CHA-related child can attend a CPD summer camp for \$10. Approximately one-third of the kids aged 6-12 are currently involved.

--The park liaison position held by Robert Steele (now a county commissioner) will not be filled until late spring.

5. Approval of November meeting minutes – not available at this time.

6. Treasurer's Report – Vickie Matthews

The monthly report was distributed and approved on voice vote. There has been little change since November; we have \$2791 in the bank.

7. President's Report – Jill Niland

--The CPD's disability officer contacted Jill several times to highlight the fixes being made at Montrose. (See Dana's comments above.)

--Friends of the Parks has made their annual call for grant applications.

--Leslie Borns, Montrose Steward, has received an IDNR grant (via the park district) for the Montrose Dune.

--Randi has been trying to put together a public meeting to educate park users on what can be done about nuisance geese. She has concluded that it would be better to create a white paper on the topic (which she will do in conjunction with the Chicago Ornithological Society).

--It is hoped that Ellen Sargent, CPD natural resources, can attend the February LPAC meeting.

8. Old Business

Betsy Altman is not getting the Yahoo Group mail; Jill will contact Marty for help.

9. New Business

--Betsy Altman: Meeting attendance is low due to a lack of controversial issues. We should consider amending the by-laws so we can meet, as a board, via phone or email.

--Jill Niland distributed a list of points for future discussion on this issue:

PACs – advocacy driven, project driven or a combination

LPAC is generally not project driven

--large park; diffuse constituencies

--have advocated for different issues/programs/project in the past; fewer currently

--lack of fund raising capacity; limited active membership

--other organizations do the large projects and supply the funds.

Use of resources - does what we are doing make sense for the organization we now are?

--meeting schedule and types of meetings: board versus program; use of internet?

--bylaws - more complex than our current activities require?

--activities - willingness to take on projects?

--liaison/cooperation with other organizations working in and for the parks?

Our role in the future?

10. The meeting adjourned at 8:55pm.